

# **Preliminary Vision Statement**

## **Water Management in the Clark Fork River Basin**

**Draft of February 3, 2003**

This vision statement should guide the use and management of water in the Clark Fork River Basin. It will also guide the development of options or strategies to protect the security of water rights, promote the orderly development of water, and provide for the conservation of water.

1. Understand the system to be managed, including:
  - ❑ The physical availability of surface and ground water;
  - ❑ The legal availability of water;
  - ❑ Existing water uses;
  - ❑ Emerging needs and interests;
  - ❑ The impact of land and natural resource use on water availability; and
  - ❑ Information needed to improve water management.
2. On the basis of current information and understanding, develop a water management system that:
  - ❑ Addresses the unique needs and interests of individual sub-basins within the context of the basin as a whole;
  - ❑ Builds on and integrates existing systems for water rights, land-use planning, the permitting of sanitation systems, and so on;
  - ❑ Recognizes the inter-relationships of existing management practices, such as the timing of diversions and return flows and surface-ground water interactions;
  - ❑ Monitors and evaluates the water management system on an ongoing basis; and
  - ❑ Creates an expectation of continuing to learn more about the water management system and adapting water management strategies based on new information and understanding.
3. Manage the system according to the following goals:
  - ❑ Recognize and protect existing rights;
  - ❑ Manage for multiple uses;
  - ❑ Cooperate during shortages;
  - ❑ Continue water education; and
  - ❑ Protect, conserve, and sustain the water resource.